


## 34. Political refugees from Europe



Alexander Rypinski. Bruce Castle Museum.

“Undoubtedly the most distinguished of the refugees of that time resident in Tottenham was the poet Alexander Rypinski. He was not a Pole by birth, but a polonised Byelorussian nobleman, although he spoke and wrote in both languages.”

 Guy de Picarda, *Polish and Byelorussian Emigres in Old Tottenham (1830-1863)*, Bruce Castle Museum.

By 1850 there were a number of Polish refugees living in Tottenham. Father Brzezinski, a Polish Roman Catholic priest, was working as a teacher at Mr Hill's School at Bruce Castle. Charles Jaworski worked teaching Languages and History at the same school. Mr Przyemski gave French and German lessons at the Grove House School and Alexander Rypinski worked at the Eagle House School on Tottenham Green.

Although the 1851 Census shows Rypinski living in Chances Row, by 1855 the rate books show he had moved to No 5, Grove Place. There Rypinski had his own printing press on which he printed his own literary works as well as at least one number of the annual report of the London Literary Association of the Friends of Poland. Rypinski wrote in the Byelorussian language, thereby keeping alive the language of his birth. His books are now in the Francis Skaryna

Byelorussian Library and Museum, 37, Holden Road, London N12.

Rypinski was a keen photographer although none of his plates remain. Bruce Castle Museum still hold two of his drawings of the Eagle House School. In 1858 Rypinski returned to his homeland, dying two years later.

At the end of the eighteenth century both Poland and Byelorussia (also known as White Russia) was overwhelmed by Tsarist Russia. Both countries made attempts to regain their freedom but were doomed to failure. There were three uprisings against the Russians in 1812, 1830 and 1863, and after each unsuccessful revolt, patriots were forced to leave their homeland and seek political asylum in either France or England. Some 500 patriots came to England after the 1830 Uprising; the Tottenham refugees being part of that group.

Bylorussia became an independent republic in 1918. It is now a constituent Republic of the USSR and occupies a seat in the United Nations.

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Many refugees came to England in the nineteenth century, for Britain operated an open-house policy of which it was duly proud. Italian refugees came in the 1820s and 30s (Mazzini arrived in 1837). Many Poles arrived after 1831 and were


amongst the poorest of all the refugee groups. There were also Spanish exiles and French socialists escaping political persecution.

The 1848 Revolutions in Europe changed the scene. Many radicals returned while refugees such as Louis Philippe and Metternich arrived instead. However as reaction followed revolution, the revolutionaries returned . . . men such as Louis Blanc, Ledru-Rollin, Victor Hugo, Jossuth, Herzen and Orsini. There were many from France and Germany and after 1849 from Poland. By March 1853, there were 2,500 Poles living in England.

The life of the refugee was not a happy one. They lived in very poor conditions, received no financial help from the British, their English neighbours viewed them with intense suspicion and they lived in constant fear of spies. The British Government maintained police surveillance over the refugee communities.

There was never any political sympathy for the Poles among the working class although there were close links between the exiles and the Chartist leaders. Lord Dudley Stuart MP was a keen Polophile and offered friendship and support to the Polish nobility, organising the Literary Association of the Friends of Poland.

In the 1860s, many refugees went to settle permanently in America, while others were allowed home when European governments offered amnesty to political dissidents.

 Bernard Porter, *The Refugee Question in Mid-Victorian Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 1979.

The Enumerator Schedules of the 1851 and 1861 Census show a considerable number of residents born out of the parishes of Tottenham and Hornsey. There was obviously a continuous movement of people from rural areas into the town, and similarly a move from the northern towns down to the south. There is also evidence of people coming from abroad.

William Tyndall: Grove Place, Aged 38, Clerk in the Atlas Assurance, Born Surinam (British citizen)

August Fischer: Page Green, Aged 41, German and Baltic merchant, Born Hamburg (British citizen)

Annette Holloway: Grove Place, Aged 21, Dressmaker, Born Paris, France

Jane Gott: Tottenham Green, Aged 74, Pauper, Born New York

Jane Smith: Stamford Hill, Aged 25, Cook, Born Van Diemen's Land (British citizen)

Excardia Antonio: Chances Row, Aged 32, Scholar learning English, Born Mexico

Charles Jaworski: White Hart Court, Aged 47, Teacher of foreign languages, political refugee, Born Poland

Kasper Ruesli: Tottenham Terrace, Aged 27, Footman, Born Switzerland

K. Harnell: Nightingale Place, Aged 38, female, Born Kings Town, St Vincent, West Indies

Vincent Garden: Middle Lane, Aged 11, Born China (British)

Frederick Heineman: Stoke Newington Grove, Aged 45, Baker, Born Germany

Frank Castelli: Markfield House, Aged 36, General Merchant, Born Turkey (British)

Demetrious Spartali: Page Green, Aged 32, General Merchant, Born Smyrna (British).



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The Enumerator Schedules of the 1861 Census show that many of the boarding schools in Hornsey and Tottenham educated children whose parents were working overseas. Amongst the many pupils at the Hill's school at Bruce Castle there were boys born in the Cape of Good Hope, New Granada, Cuba, Mexico, Peru, Gibraltar, Brazil, Ireland, Scotland, Spain, Australia, Africa, Java, Portugal, Ecuador, India, Porto Rico, Canada and Tasmania.

# 35. The development of quinine saved Europeans in the tropics

John Eliot Howard 1807-1883

“Quinologist, son of Luke Howard, the meteorologist, was born at Plaistow Essex 11th Dec 1807. Throughout his life he was connected with his father’s chemical manufactory at Stratford. His first paper, a report on the collection of cinchona in the British Museum made by the Spanish botanist Pavon was published in 1852. In the following year he joined the Pharmaceutical Society and, in 1857 the Linnean Society. Being specially interested in quinine he purchased at Madrid in 1858, the manuscript *Nueva Quinologia* of Pavon and the specimens of cinchona belonging to Pavon; employed a botanical artist to illustrate them, and published in 1862 the sumptuous *Illustrations ‘Nueva Quinologia’ of Pavon and Observations on the Barks Described*. Howard’s second great work, *The Quinology of the East Indian Plantations* published in 1869, was the result of his examination of the bark of all the forms of cinchona introduced into India from the Andes by Markham, Spruce and Cross. For this he received the thanks of her Majesty’s Government, and in 1874 was elected as a fellow of the Royal Society. Howard took considerable interest in gardening, and especially in hybridisation as bearing upon cultivated cinchonas, and was the author of numerous scientific papers, chiefly on quinology. He also gave addresses on both science and revelation at the Victoria Institute of which he was vice-president.

“He died at his house, Lord’s Mead, Tottenham, Middlesex, 22nd November 1883, and was buried in Tottenham cemetery. Weddell dedicated to him the genus *Howardia* of the Cinchonaeae. He married Maria, daughter of W. D. Crewdson of Kendal, and left a large family.”


 *Dictionary of National Biography*. Volume X. Smith, Elder and Co, 1908. Wood Green Library.

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Howard and Sons began to manufacture quinine in 1824 and were to remain a major manufacturer of quinine from cinchona bark. Quinine is an important drug in the treatment of malaria.

The India Office commissioned Mr Clements Markham to introduce the cinchona tree of South America into India where many people suffered malaria. John Eliot Howard was approached for his advice on the project and he worked on the various barks produced in India to establish which was the best producer of quinine in that terrain.


“In 1862 he presented the Indian government with a fine plant of ‘cinchoma uritusinga’ a variety of *cinchona officinalis*, 6 feet high, which he had raised in his greenhouse at Tottenham, from seed sent to him by Senor Riofrio, from Loxa. This arrived in India in due course, and many cuttings were eventually successfully taken.”

 *The Chemist and Druggist*, December 15th 1883 p. 595.

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Howard was given the Hanbury Medal in 1883.

“Mr Howard’s studies of the cinchonas have been so thorough, so minute and so intelligent, as to make them of the highest importance, not to pharmacy only, but to the wealth and benefit of the civilised world.”


 *The Chemist and Druggist*, October 15th 1883 p. 517.



John Eliot Howard. Bruce Castle Museum.

Quinine was first isolated from the cinchona bark in early 1820s by two Frenchmen, Josephe Pelletier and Josep Caventou.

“There was a period during the late war when the shortage of one indispensable substance was causing almost as much anxiety amongst the chiefs of the allied forces as the loss of an army would have done. This substance was quinine, without a full supply of which the armies in Macedonia, Italy, Palestine and Egypt would have been reduced practically to impotence while it is hardly an exaggeration to say that the cause which they fought would have been placed in jeopardy had not the necessary supplies of this invaluable alkaloid been forthcoming at the critical hour.”

 *The Indian and Eastern Druggist*, June 1921, Volume 2, p. 135.

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Quinine was a vital medical supply for Europeans living in malarial areas in the colonies of Africa, India and Asia.

“Malaria cases in India in 1961 plummeted to 50,000 from an estimated 100 million 10 years earlier. The story was repeated worldwide with optimism and scientists were forecasting the end to this common but crippling disease.

“Today the celebrations seem terribly premature. There are an estimated 150 million new malaria cases each year and many as 800 million people may be suffering from the disease.”

“Two new drugs that offer some hope of eliminating the parasites in malaria victims are mefloquine and an ancient Chinese remedy called ginghamosu. But research efforts must go on if these drugs are to be tested and developed quickly.”

“The cost of such protection from malaria would be twenty dollars per person per year. In many countries such as India, Pakistan and Ethiopia, this would be more than the per capita health spending for all health services.”

 Andrew Williams, *New Internationalist*, March 1984.

# 36. British missionary activity in the Pacific

"In this quiet country village, as it was then, the young couple lived for some years. In a little house upon the brow of the hill, just beyond the Green, and situated between the spot where the Congregational Chapel now stands and the High Cross, their son John, the future Apostle of Polynesia, was born, on the 27th June, 1796."

Rev James Ellis, *John Williams, The Martyr Missionary of Polynesia*, S. W. Partridge and Co p. 18.

John Williams was born in Tottenham. The spot is now marked by a blue plaque in the wall of the post office at High Cross. He went to school in Lower Edmonton. At the age of fourteen he was apprenticed to an ironmonger in City Road but converted to Christianity in 1814. He decided to train as a missionary with the London Missionary Society. Sailing with his bride, Mary, they reached Tahiti in 1817. John quickly learnt the Tahitan language and busied himself building a small ship. Moving to Raiatea, he built a house and another boat, for there was no other means of transport to other islands. It was a hard life for the pair of them. Mary took the brunt of constant childbearing as well and was frequently sick and poorly. The couple eventually returned to England on leave in 1834 where they stayed for four years. When they returned to the Pacific John Williams was killed by the people on the island of Erromango, while exploring the New Hebrides Islands, in November 1839.

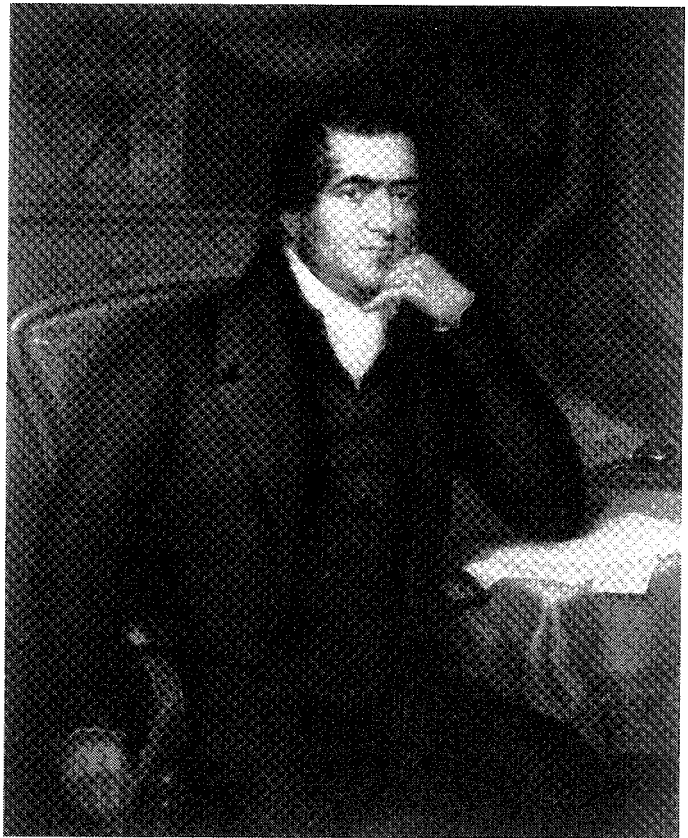
Missionaries very quickly followed in the wake of Captain Cook. As early as 1796 a London Missionary Society ship, *Duff*, set sail for Tahiti. The missionaries began to attack what they considered pagan practices and local customs. They successfully abolished cannibalism, which was widely practised among the South Sea Islanders; for people in the Pacific believed they gained the strength and vitality of the enemy by eating his flesh. The missionaries also destroyed pagan idols and relentlessly fought against the local reluctance to wear clothes.

The missionaries however brought the benefits of medicine for which they were much respected but they also effectively destroyed the culture of the peoples of the Pacific. Paganism had been destroyed by the 1870s, a source of satisfaction to Europeans, but the people had been left with a deep sense of their own inferiority.

There was considerable debate in Europe as to whether Europeans should venture into the Pacific paradise. Diderot, the French philosopher, warned of the dangers of Christian civilisation. "One day they will come, with crucifix in one hand and the dagger in the other, to cut your throats or to force you to accept their customs and opinions: one day under their rule you will be almost as unhappy as they are."

"The great bane of the natives has been idleness. It will be a great blessing to them in some useful employment."

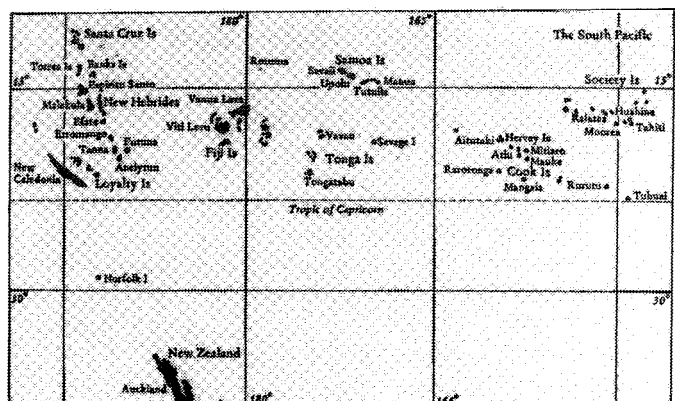
Quote from the Directors of the Tahitan Missionary Society.



John Williams, painted by G. Baxter, 1844. National Portrait Gallery.

"In the Cook Islands, the Protestant missionary establishment, directed by Rev John Williams and Rev Asron Buzacott, soon became an absolute theocracy. Before the British Government annexed these islands, the missionaries' laws were downright peculiar. How else would one describe laws that imposed fines on anyone, including Europeans, who was out-of-doors after 8pm, and that required anyone with his arm round his betrothed's waist at dusk to carry a burning torch in his hand under penalty of a fine if he let it go out? There was also a fine for anyone found weeping over the grave of a woman not related to him."

Philip Snow and Stefanie Waine, *The People from the Horizon*, Phaidon, Oxford, 1979, p. 131.



Right: Map of the Pacific, Beyond the Reefs, The Life of John Williams, MacDonald, London 1974.

The Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese had, in the early days, dominated the sea routes of the Pacific. After Cook's voyages, the English, Russian, French and Americans made a series of voyages too.

Captain Bligh sailed to Tahiti in the *Bounty* in 1788 with the express object of digging up breadfruit trees and transporting them to the slave colonies of Jamaica and St Vincent. The crew mutinied and Bligh was set adrift. The mutineers, afraid to return to England, settled on the Pitcairn Islands, while Bligh, against great odds, managed to return to England. The English continued to sail Pacific waters.


The first Russian circumnavigation was led by Rear-Admiral Adam Johann von Krusenstern, 1803-6. This great voyage was followed by four other voyages of exploration. Many Pacific islands were given Russian names. However, Russia decided that the long distance from Russian ports made colonies impracticable.

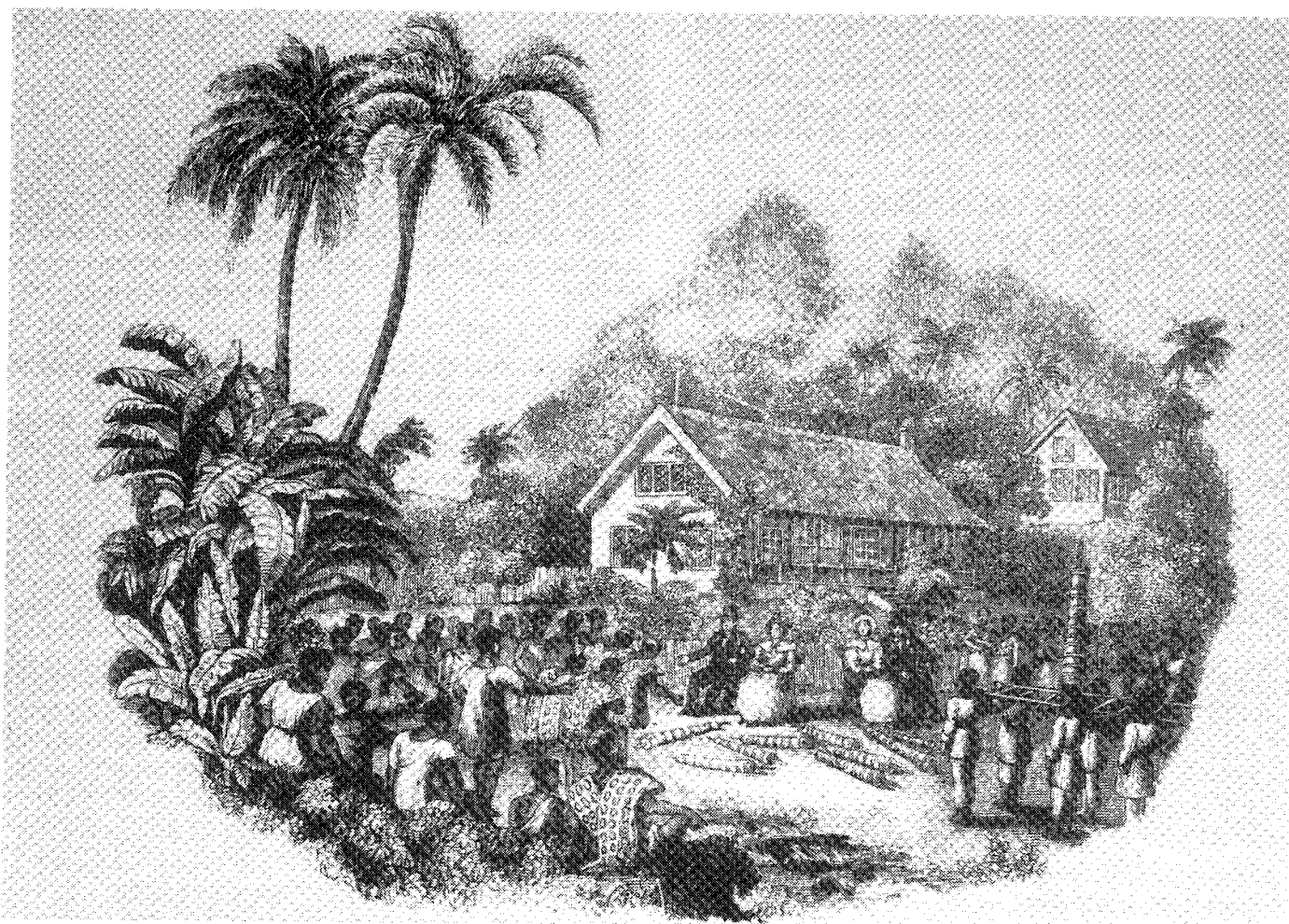
In 1788 Comte Jean Francois Galaup de Leperouse, captain of a French ship, visited Easter Island, Hawaii, Samoa and Tonga. After visiting Botany Bay in Australia, the two ships went missing. A new voyage was organised by Vice-Admiral

Antoine Raymond-Joseph de Bruny to find them. They were unsuccessful. The Revolutionary Government of France wanted to extend its influence in the Pacific and more ships were sent out. Nicholas Marchand took possession of one of the Marquesan islands charted by an American in 1791.

The Pacific Ocean was an obvious area of possible influence for the newly independent United States of America. Josiah Ingraham was the first American explorer there. He found three North Marquesan Islands. Edmund Fanning, the first American circumnavigator, also discovered and charted many islands. The Americans were not so much interested in colonies as in extending the trade in whaling and sealing.

Up to the mid century, the exploration of the Pacific reached a new level of scientific sophistication. Information was gathered on mineralogy, flora, languages and ethnology. Dumont d'Urville made a series of scientific voyages, 1823 and 1837-40. Charles Wilkes made a four-year voyage recording scientific data for America. The last decade of the nineteenth century saw the exploration of the deepest Melanesian

 Philip Snow and Stefanie Waine, *The People from the Horizon*, Phaidon, Oxford 1979.



The Burning of Idols, John Williams, A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands, London 1837.

# 37. The plight of Aboriginal peoples as Europeans advanced


There were rumours buzzing around Guy's Hospital when Thomas Hodgkin arrived at work in an open carriage accompanied by a half-naked Native American. It was considered a scandal; a scandal that was to affect his career. The senior staff at the hospital disapproved of what they felt was eccentric behaviour. When Thomas was passed over for promotion in 1837 he resigned in disgust. Fortunately he had a private income and he was therefore free to turn his energies to setting up the British and Foreign Aborigine Protection Society. The Society did not challenge the right of colonial trade but pointed out to the general public the harmful effects of colonisation on the colonised.

When Thomas was a small baby the family moved to Tottenham, living on Tottenham Green. A Quaker family, they no doubt moved to be near the Tottenham Meeting House. Thomas and his brother John were educated at home. Thomas became fluent in Latin, Italian, German and French. He also had lessons from his neighbour Luke Howard, "who stimulated his interest in scientific philosophy".

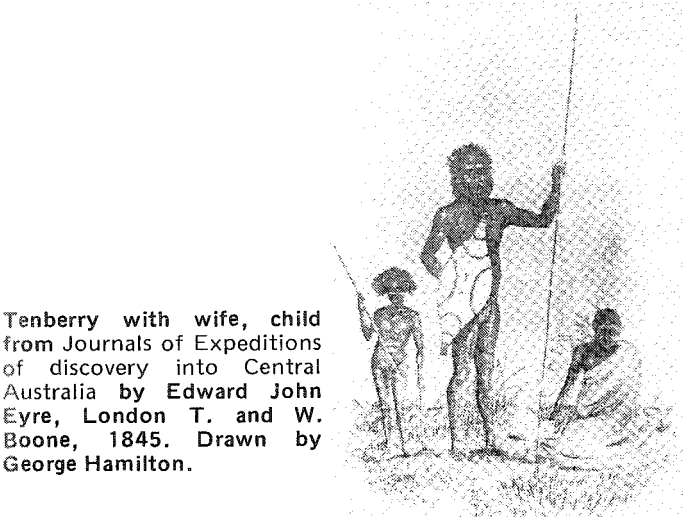
By the age of nine, Thomas was already concerned about the lives of the aboriginal peoples of Africa, Australia, Asia, and in particular North America.

His first job was with William Allen and then he became an apprentice to a chemist in Brighton. There he wrote *Essay on the Promotion of Civilisation*. The essay summed up what was to be his life's work. His concern was to protect the aboriginal people from the advancing tide of Europeans. He questioned whether European civilisation was superior to that of others. Although he questioned the "civilising effect of white people on native people; he saw the strength of aboriginal people as well as their vulnerability", Thomas Hodgkin still had difficulty respecting other cultures. He wanted to teach aboriginal people the skills that had helped the white man to progress. He still felt that white people were superior.

Training as a doctor, at first he had a promising career. His friendship with Edward Warulan, an aboriginal boy whose school fees he paid, and his sponsorship of young Native American Indian men were to wreck his chances of further promotion.

 Michael Rose, *Curator of the Dead Thomas Hodgkin (1798-1866)*, Peter Owen, 1981.

The British and Foreign Aborigine Society was an offshoot movement of the Anti-Slavery campaign. The nineteenth century increasingly saw a confrontation between Europeans



Tenberry with wife, child from Journals of Expeditions of discovery into Central Australia by Edward John Eyre, London T. and W. Boone, 1845. Drawn by George Hamilton.




Above: Thomas Hodgkin, Friends House Library.

Left: A Maori Warrior. The Aborigine's Friend or the Colonial Intelligencer, 1847-48. Printed by the Aborigine Protection Society. Friends House Library.

and the people of the Pacific, America and Africa. The Native Americans were under constant pressure as white Americans began moving west. The Australian Aborigines and the people of Tasmania were hunted and killed like wild animals by the early white settlers. Although the Aborigine Protection Society voiced a concern for the plight of such peoples, they could offer few practical solutions to the problem. White men wanted good farming land and nothing could check this greed.


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The Victorian period saw the emergence of anthropology, the study of "primitive people". The writings of such scholars confirmed the deep racism in society and gave that racism an academic credence. Even the writings of Darwin were perverted by others. Some Victorians maintained that if only the fittest survived, "the Negro population of Northern America and the West Indies might soon follow these tribes towards extinction, though such hopes could scarcely be entertained about the bulk of the population of Africa and India". It was argued that Black people had smaller brains and inferior languages. All such false theories confirmed that it was right for the British to acquire colonies. It was argued that if the white man was superior he could rule Black people.

 Christine Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971.

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"Mr Eyre brought home with him two young aboriginal Australian boys, and kept them in England at his own expense. They went with him to Buckingham Palace, and were introduced to the Queen and the late Prince Consort, who seemed much interested in them. One of the boys proving of a vicious temper, Mr Eyre sent him back, the other the home Government took charge of and put to school, under the care of the Quaker philanthropist Dr Hodgkin. Eventually he caught cold and died from a pulmonary attack when about seventeen years of age. He was well-conducted and intelligent, and though not clever, read and wrote very well, and was learning the business of a saddler very creditably when he died."


 Hamilton Hume, *The Life of Edward John Eyre, Late Governor of Jamaica*, Richard Bentley, 1867 p. 95.

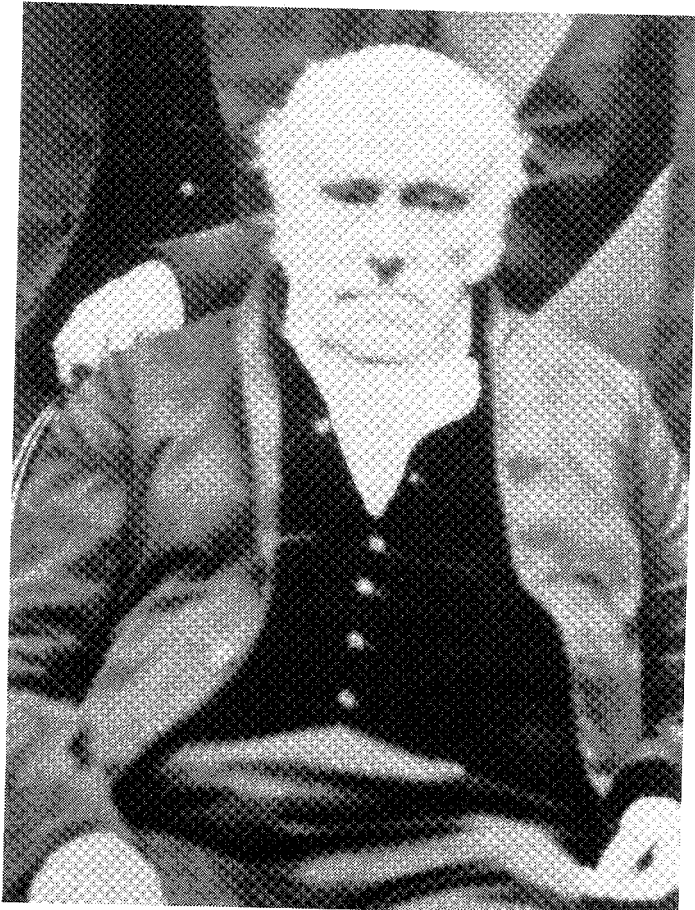
# 38. The British opium trade with China

“We feel it to be our Christian duty, on behalf of the Religious Society of Friends, to express to the Head of the Administration, and, through him, to the other responsible members of the Government, our sentiments respecting the growth and preparation of opium in British India, and its introduction into China by British merchants, in direct contravention of the laws of that Empire.”

This tract was written by Robert Forster (1791-1873) to the Earl of Derby, First Lord of the Treasury. The letter was signed on behalf of the Meeting representing the Religious Society of Friends held on the 10th of September 1858.

Robert Forster, born in Tottenham, was brother to William and Josiah. Robert was a member of the Anti-Slavery Movement but his main concern was to lobby for the end of the pernicious opium trade.

 Friends House Library, Euston Road.



Robert Forster. Friends House Library.

China had been ruled by the conquering Manchu Dynasty since 1644. The Manchu rulers wished to keep strangers out of the Empire and stop all foreign influences, so all Chinese ports were closed to European traders from 1757, except for the port of Canton. European traders were frustrated by this, for great profit could be made trading with the Chinese. The East India Company, with the Chinese monopoly, sold English

goods in India for silver and then sailed to China to buy the much valued Chinese tea and silks. At the end of the eighteenth century, the Company began selling opium grown in Bengal, to China. Huge profits could be made. Although the Manchu rulers banned the trade in opium, the English continued. The conflict developed into war.

When the Chinese government asked for all English opium in Canton to be handed over, the British Navy were sent to bombard Canton into submission. The Chinese were militarily inferior and the humiliated Manchu Emperor was forced to sign the Treaty of Nanking in 1842. The terms gave Hong Kong to the English as well as the right to trade in three other ports and the Chinese had to pay huge compensation for losing the war.

The Manchu rulers had been shown as weak and the Ming people rebelled in the Taiping Rebellion of 1850. The Manchu felt forced to turn to the English for support. The Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston, supported the interest of British traders in China with his “gun-boat policy”. In the second Opium War English soldiers captured Peking and the magnificent Summer Palace of the Manchu was burnt to the ground. Many Chinese art treasures were brought back to England.

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The morality of trading in a drug such as opium did not bother the conscience of successive British governments. The diary of Edward H. Cree, Surgeon RN, 1837-1856, shows how the Navy carried out official policy with unthinking obedience.


Tuesday 4th May, 1841: “The gunboats are gone up to Canton to protect the merchant ships there as the mandarins are getting saucy again.”

Thursday 6th May: “The trade is stopped again at Canton. More gunboats are sent up there as the mandarins are threatening the ships.”

Tuesday 18th May: “We are to go up to Canton River again.”

Tuesday 25th May: “Firing continues and clouds of smoke rise thick and heavy from the devoted city and shells are seen bursting through the roofs of some of the larger buildings. I spent most of the forenoon on my perch at the mast-head. The suburbs on both sides of the city are in flames. Shells and rockets are flying into enemy’s encampments outside the walls. One of our ships was firing briskly into a fort about 2 miles above the city.”

Thursday 27th May: “Our troops have possession of all the heights round the city which now is at our mercy. The Chinese mandarins have been brought to their knees. The city is to be ransomed for 6 million of dollars.”

 Ed. Michael Levien, *The Cree Journals*, Webb and Bower, 1981.

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The Treaty of Nanking was made on August 29th 1842 at the end of the first Opium War.

“The English have put up a proclamation. After describing of the city and the subsequent peace negotiations with I-li-pu at Nanking, the proclamation continues: ‘As the people here are still in an uneasy state, we have set aside 1,500,000 dollars, out of the sum to be paid to us in accordance with the treaty, to be used by his Excellency I-li-pu for the relief of distress at Chinking and the re-establishment of the people in their peaceful occupations.’ They are also telling the people to go to



Sui-shan, where 'opium is on sale very cheap -- an opportunity not to be missed.' ”

📖 Arthur Waley, *The Opium Wars Through Chinese Eyes*, George Allen and Allen, 1958.

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“The method of self-strengthening lies in learning what they [the western nations] can do, and in taking over what they rely upon. If we can really and thoroughly understand their methods – and the more we learn the more we improve – and promote them further and further, can we not expect after a century or so that we can reject the barbarians and stand on our own two feet?”

Li Hung-Chang, writing a memorial to the Chinese Emperor in 1872, after China's defeat by the Western nations, explaining that China must gain strength and learning from the West.

📖 Islay Doncaster, *Traditional China*, Harrap World History Programme, 1975.

**Above: The bombardment of Canton. A Watercolour by Edward Cree. By permission of Webb and Bower.**

A pamphlet was published, unfortunately undated, called *Is China Free?* It was printed by the Women's Anti-Opium Urgency Committee whose Honorary Secretary was Miss R. B. Braithwaite, 312, Camden Road, London N.

📖 Friends House Library.

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England continued to sell opium to China until 1903. A commission set up to look into the growing of opium in India in 1893 found that “the evil effects of the drug in India had been greatly exaggerated; they drew a parallel between its temperate use and that of alcohol in England”, and concluded the trade need not be stopped.

📖 Horace G. Alexander, *Joseph Gundry Alexander*, The Swarthmore Press Ltd, 1920, pp. 78-9.